

# NATIONAL DAY PARADE 2016

14 May 2016. It was the date when I was going for the National Day Parade 2016 NPCC selection. The teacher officers, as well as the unit, gave me this opportunity to give it a shot for this year's NDP parade. It was certainly nerve-racking as I bathed myself among the hundreds of cadets that showed up for the selection. Unfortunately, due to a communication problem, I showed up in the wrong attire. Luckily, it did not really affect my results. I gave my all during the selection in the aim of doing the unit proud and alas, I was selected to be one of the 60 cadets to participate in NDP.



The first training was at the Nee Soon Camp and from then on, I had NDP trainings for the next 10 Saturdays. The first NDP training was an extremely new and unique experience for me. I was able to learn new drills and meet people from different walks of life. Gradually, I started mixing around with the different people from the different units. Fortunately, for the first four trainings, I was put in the main team of 36 cadets. I felt a sense of patriotism as I marched alongside students from different uniform groups, the military squads and the volunteers from the different companies. In those sessions, not only was I able to brush up my drill standards, I also learnt to effectively communicate with other cadets.

11 June 2016. It was the first time I stepped into the Singapore National Stadium as an NPCC cadet. This was the site where NDP 2016 was going to take place. With the usual 3-hour long trainings, followed by a break that included food such as Old Chang Kee and drinks such as soya bean and milo, training sessions were extended to 9 pm. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I missed one of the trainings there. However, I still remained in the squad.

9th August 2016. It was D-day. As we went through our usual preparation of drills, this time with our very own collared t-shirt, we had mixed feelings of excitement, nervousness and fascination. We all knew today was the last day. The strong bonds of friendship we have formed over the last three months pulled us together on this very day. After our dinner, it was time for the National Day Parade 2016 to commence. \*boom\* \*boom\* \*boom\*... \*boom\* \*boom\* \*boom\*. As we marched out into the huge open space, filled with Singaporeans of all races, ethnicity and traditions, a sense of patriotism overwhelmed every single one of us. We all knew this was going to be last time we are marching together as a contingent. When it was over, many of us cried and felt reluctant to leave the National Stadium.



As I look back and reminisce those times, I start to realise how much I have learnt and grown from this event. I was able to gain new knowledge of the CCA from other units and apply it to my own unit. Most importantly, I was able to make friends, many friends from more than half of the units in Singapore. I also started to feel passionate for the CCA and wanted to go for more CCA-related events and trainings. So, to the juniors who are reading this, go for the many events in NPCC. Not only will you be able to have a wider scope about the CCA, you can develop your own character. Remember, NPCC is not just about your own trainings, there are so much more out there for you to explore and see. Make the best out of NPCC and strive to improve yourself!